(b) if so, the reasons thereof;

(c) the steps proposed/taken for ensuring regular payment to those low paid workers immediately on completion of their contract; and

(d) the likely date by which the payment due to these employees will be made?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Payment upto June, 2002 has already been made to all the casual artists, including casual Floor Assistants.

(d) Does not arise.

FDI in Print Media

1274. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whetehr Government have since decided to allow Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in print media against the recommendations of the Standing Committee of Information Technology as also against the decision of Government in early 50s;

(b) if so, the compelling reasons therefor;

(c) whether the limit of FDI will be raised in print media as it happened in banking sector, where initially 20 per cent was allowed in May 2001, but after nine months it was raised to 49 per cent; and

(d) if so, what safeguards Government have taken to ensure that the print media is not influenced by foreign magnels?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) and (b) The Government has decided to allow Foreign Direct Investment upto 26% in Indian entities publishing newspapers and periodicals dealing in news and current affairs subject to suitable safeguards. It has also been decided to allow Indian editions of foreign scientific, technical and speciality magazines/periodicals/journals and foreign investment upto 74% in Indian entities publishing scientific, technical and speciality magazines/periodical/journals.

This has been done with a view to, *inter alia* bring in greater diversity among newspapers and periodicals, bring national dailies to international standards and provide more economical and easier access to foreign scientific technical and specialist magazines, journals and periodicals.

The above decision has been taken after addressing various concerns including those expressed by the Standing Committee on Information Technology.

(c) There is no such proposal at present.

(d) Does not arise in view of (c) above.

Payment for TV channels

1275. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are taking any steps to ensure that the viewers pay for only the channels of their choice and not the once that they do not usually watch;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government propose to introduce a modulator box for the covenience of such viewers; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING (SHRIMATI SUSHMA SWARAJ): (a) to (c) Government has introduced the Cable Television networks (Regulation) Amandment Bill, 2002 in Parliament, with a view to introduce an addressable system for pay channel viewing through the cable networks. This will give choice to the consumer to pay for only those channels that he chooses to view. The Bill has been passed by the Lok Sabha on 15.5.2002.

Demand of united forum of Prasar Bharati Employees

†1276. SHRI SUKHDEV SINGH LIBRA: Will the Minister of INFORMATION AND BROADCASTING be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prasar Bharti Management has received Memoranda from the United Forum of Prasar Bharti Employees regarding various problems of A.I.R. and Doordarshan employees;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.